



Weekly Bulletin

Mary, Queen of the Family Parish

St. Michael's Church - 58 Orwell Street, South Blacktown. & St. Patrick's Church - 51-59 Allawah Street, Blacktown.

We acknowledge the Darug people, the traditional custodians on whose land we worship.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C

8TH DECEMBER 2024

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Mary Queen of the Family (MQOF) parish strives to grow as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, continuing to deepen in understanding the Sacred Scriptures and Sacred Tradition of the Catholic Church and to live as a faithful and committed Catholic community, evangelising and responding to the needs of the family in the Blacktown community and beyond.

LITURGY TIMES

Sunday Masses

5.30pm Sat Vigil (St Patrick's)
7.00am Sun (St Patrick's)
8.00am Sun (St Michael's)
9.30am Sun (St Michael's)
10.00am Sun (St Patrick's)
11.00am 4th Sun - Filo Mass (St Michael's)
2:00pm - Sudanese Mass (St Patrick's)
1.00pm - Syro-Malabar Mass (St Michael's)
5.30pm Sun (St Patrick's)
6.00pm Sun (St Michael's)

Weekday Masses

St Michael's: 8am Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
7.30pm Wed only

St Patrick's: 9am Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs,
Sat and 7.30pm Fri only.

RECONCILIATION

St Michael's: Wed 6:30pm-7:20pm

St Patrick's: Fri 6:30pm-7:20pm &
Sat 9:30am-10:30am

HOLY HOUR

St Michael's: Wed 6:30pm-7:30pm

St Patrick's: Fri 6:30pm-7:30pm

Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals & Anointing of the Sick by appointment.

Second Sunday of Advent

In the fifteenth year of the rule of Tiberias...during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God was spoken to John, son of Zechariah, in the desert. He went about the entire region of the Jordan proclaiming a baptism of repentance which led to the forgiveness of sins, as is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A herald's voice in the wilderness, crying: 'Make ready the way of the Lord...and all humankind shall see the salvation of God.'" Luke 3:1-6

My limited knowledge of the Old or First Testament leads me to think that the central figure of today's gospel-reading might well have been the first hippie listed in recorded history. I sometimes wonder what his parents Elizabeth and Zechariah might have thought of their only son and his somewhat unusual life-style. Perhaps God saved them the embarrassment of trying to explain to their neighbours just what had gotten into their son, by taking them to heaven before John went wild. In light of Zechariah's high profile in the Temple, John, too, would probably have been in line for an important position. However, he chose to go in a different direction.

Luke expands on that different direction in today's gospel-reading. He starts by listing all the notables in positions of power, and then proceeds to point out that God's word eluded them all and, instead, came to an eccentric, who was living an alternate life-style. I wonder if there is something about position and power that makes those, who aspire to those things or who have them, impervious to hearing or understanding the word of God. By way of contrast, God's word took hold of John and fired him up to embark on a mission of waking up his world. John found a freedom that escapes many of us. Ignoring both fear and favour, he found within himself the ability to share the insights that God's Spirit had led him to discover. Luke, having reflected on John and his frenzied activity of calling people to a change of heart and outlook, described him as the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy that there would come on the scene an obscure figure who would call people to ready themselves for the coming of the Messiah by changing their hearts:

"A herald's voice in the desert, crying: 'Make ready the way of the Lord, clear him a straight path. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be levelled. The windings shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth, and all humankind shall see the salvation of God'" (Isaiah 40, 3-5).

It takes courage and integrity for anyone to claim her/his freedom. In that regard John the Baptist is a model and inspiration for us all. Dawna Markova is a woman of our own times who seems to have found her freedom, and is not afraid to claim it in the public forum. Perhaps we, too can learn from her as we do from the Baptist: "I will not die an un-lived life. I will not live in fear of falling or catching fire.

Cont'd.....

Parish Directory

St. Michael's Church - 58 Orwell Street, South Blacktown &
St. Patrick's Church - 51-59 Allawah Street Blacktown.

Parish Office: At St. Patrick's Church. Office Hours: Mon-Fri: 9am-4pm

Telephone: 02 9622 1125 A/H: 02 8705 0830.

Website: www.mqofblacktown.org.au Email: admin@mqofblacktown.org.au

Parish Team:

Parish Priest: Fr. Wim Hoekstra.

Assistant Priests: Fr. Ever Bernaldez, MSP & Fr. Andrew Rooney

Deacon: Rev. John Cinya.

Finance Officer: Sarah Canete-Damole Email: accounts@mqofblacktown.org.au

Parish Assistant: Ann Hart (Wed-Fri)

Email: admin@mqofblacktown.org.au

Sacramental Coordinator: Gerald "Ged" Oblea. (Mon to Wed) Mobile: 0422 724 008

Email: sacraments@mqofblacktown.org.au

Catechist Coordinator: Sandra Baker

Parish Pastoral Council: Chair: Cecil Fernandes; Asst Chair: Joshua Carr Secretary: Savita Surendra

Members: Beato Pudadera, Ekhlas Ambili, Erica Luiz, Harlane Petersen, Helena Vea, Sidney Lazum, Fr. Wim Hoekstra, Fr. Andrew Rooney, Fr. Ever Bernaldez, Rev. John Cinya.

Parish Schools:

St Michael's Primary:

P : 8869 6200 <https://www.stmichaelsblacktown.catholic.edu.au>

St Patrick's Primary:

P : 8869 6000 <https://www.stpatsblacktown.catholic.edu.au>

Nagle College:

P : 8887 4500 <https://www.nagleblacktown.catholic.edu.au>

Patrician Brothers College:

P : 8811 0300 <https://www.patsblacktown.nsw.edu.au>

Catholic Early Learning Centre (St Michael's) :

P : 8814 8406 <https://www.celcblacktownsth.catholic.edu.au>

Aged Care Facilities:

Opal Nursing Home (37 Kildare Rd, Blacktown NSW 2148) P : 9852 9600

Mullauna Retirement Village (61 Bungarribee Rd, Blacktown NSW 2148) P : 8822 2100

I choose to inhabit my days, to allow my living to open me, to make me less afraid, more accessible, to loosen my heart until it becomes a wing, a torch, a promise. I choose to risk my significance; to live so that which came to me as a seed goes to the next as a blossom and that which came to me as a blossom, goes on as fruit."

John, of course, by using the metaphor of road maintenance and redirection, was calling his people to set about changing their own hearts and challenging the predominant culture to direct its resources to things like justice, compassion and security for everyone. He was echoing the message of Isaiah that God's saving love is for everyone without exception, and that the first step, for all who came to listen to him and be baptised, was to straighten out their lives, to get rid of whatever was blocking the way for the word of God to touch their hearts.

Advent, as we know, is a time for us to stop and ponder the significance of the coming of God among us in the person of Jesus. While Jesus, like John, spent some time in the wilderness before embarking on his mission, he immersed himself in all the nonsense, strife and madness of what is involved in living life in close proximity to other struggling human beings. He was born in a stable on the edge of a small town that was so overcrowded that there wasn't even basic accommodation available. And he grew up in a culture that was so plagued with religious rivalry and infighting that he ended his life on a cross provided by agents of a culture that was anathema to those who practiced Judaism.

The crowded urban cultures in which most of us live are quite simply symptoms of the brokenness of our world, a brokenness that cries to be mended, but a brokenness we feel unable to address because of fear, a sense of helplessness or a reluctance to claim our true freedom.

The arrival of John the Baptist with his call to all to open themselves to a change of heart and spirit came as a surprise. Yet his call evidently woke his part of the world from its slumber. His appearance was a surprise, but a reminder to those around him that the God he proclaimed is a God of surprises. Moreover, he is a reminder to us that we can never predict exactly when and how God will appear in our lives. However, we can be sure that God is present to us somehow in the events that fill our days, if only we have ears to hear and eyes to see.

This Sunday's gospel-reading is an invitation to us to stop and ponder what is calling for change in our own hearts. There will be no possibility of change if we think there is no reason to change. If we are happy that the geography of our hearts needs no maintenance or alteration, then we will stay in our ruts. But perhaps we may need to do something to open a pathway by which God can find a way into our hearts as we prepare for Christmas.

If we are tempted to think that all this is in the too-hard basket, we might do well to look at today's second reading from Paul to the Philippians. Many of us write letters at this time of the year to bring extended family members up to date. Today's extract from Philippians is a little like that. To a community with whom he has worked, Paul gives credit for their efforts to spread the good news of Jesus. But he takes no credit for his own efforts. He attributes their good work to the fact that they have opened their hearts to Jesus and God's Spirit, but that's the kind of thing God does if we take the risk of providing an opening for God to work in and through us. The invitation of Advent is to open up, even just a little, to allow Jesus to come in.

© Br. Julian McDonald cfc

Catholic Outlook is available in the foyers, please take a copy home to read.

It's FREE!!!



Liturgical Ministry Course

Dates for 2025

This is formation for anyone interested in serving within the Liturgical Ministries as Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Communion to Sick and Dying and Ministers at the Altar.

To register or find out more contact
lucy.woodbury@parracatholic.org or 0460 037 795



MQOF SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP



We encourage you to continue to support and donate non perishable items for Mary's Pantry. These are some suggestions: Cereal, Pasta, Instant Noodles, Rice, Biscuits, Milk, Tinned Soup, Tinned Fruit, Tinned, Fish, Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Spaghetti, Tinned Meat, Tinned Chickpeas, Tinned Lentils, Pasta Sauce, Baked Beans. Your donations will go to help those who are doing it tough in our community and beyond. Thank you for your generosity.

Thank you also for continuing to support the MQOF Social Justice Group 10 cents bottle collection.

Please come and join us for a cuppa and a chat at Mary's Café. We are open every Wednesday after the 9am Mass in the Cardinal Clancy Room.

All are welcome!!



FORMED



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FORMED provides the very best Catholic content from more than 60 organizations to help parishes, families and individuals explore their faith anywhere. Supporting thousands of movies, children's programs, eBooks, audio, parish programs and studies direct to your browser, mobile or connected device.

Free for our Parishioners

Follow the steps below to get access

1. Scan the QR code—to go to the FORMED website;
2. In the Parish search field—type "2148" to find our Parish name;
3. Select "Mary Queen of the Family" and press "Next";
4. Enter your Name and your Email address to register a new account and press "Sign Up";
5. Download the FORMED app on your phone and "Sign In" using your email address in step 4;
6. Browse, Watch, Listen, Read, and Study—to form your catholic conscience.



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Cf Isaiah 30:19,30

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.

FIRST READING: Baruch 5:1-9

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: PS 125. R. V.3

R ~ The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-6. 8-11

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Luke 3:4. 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:
all people shall see the salvation of God.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Baruch 5:5; 4:36

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

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PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

RECENTLY DECEASED

Michael Hodgson, Fe Alegado, Faustina Sandot.

DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Patricia Byrne, Marilyn Macabulos Nalapo.

IN MEMORIAM

Benjamin Soller, Minerva Paguyo

SICK

Cristeta, Ingrid Piu, Fr. Noel Bianco, Alejandra Montero,
Katrina Jukic, Angela Mikhaiel, Michael Flanjak.

Names submitted to Parish for the sick list will be published for 4 weeks at a time.

Mass intentions can be requested online by following the link below:

<https://www.mqofblacktown.org/mass-intention-or-offering-request>

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS TIMES

Tuesday
24 December

5:30pm
(Children's Mass)
at
St Patrick's Church

6:00pm
(Children's Mass)
at
St Michael's Church

8:30pm
(Youth Mass)
at
St Patrick's Church

Wednesday
25 December

12:00am at
St Patrick's Church

7:00am at
St Patrick's Church

8:00am at
St Michael's Church

9:30am at
St Michael's Church

10:00am at
St Patrick's Church

12:00pm at
St Patrick's Church
(Sudanese)

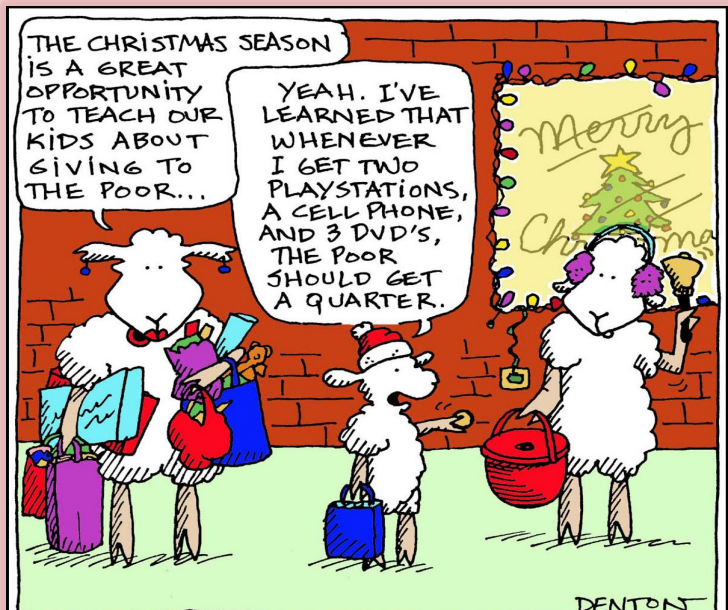
Wednesday
1 January

8:00am at
St Michael's Church

9:00am at
St Patrick's Church

There will be no
evening Mass on
Christmas Day at
either Church

The Parish Office will be closed from
Wednesday 25th December 2024 and
will reopen on Monday 6th January 2025



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“He shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land's afflicted.”

Sheepish Question:

How can I enhance my feelings of compassion with a deeper sense of justice?

THE SACRAMENTS / MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PASTORAL CARE FOR THE HOMEBOUND

Our clergy and pastoral care ministers bring the sacraments of Eucharist, reconciliation, and anointing of the sick to members who are unable to participate because of illness or aging. For more information and to arrange receiving of the sacraments, please contact the Parish Office on 9622 1125 or after office hours number 02 8705 0830.



PARISH GROUPS

HOLY FAMILY FELLOWSHIP PRAYER GROUP



Contact: Charles Hyson, 0412 631 602, www.holyfamilyfellowship.com
Meeting Time and Venue: Saturday 14 December 6:30pm-9:30pm at Sid Mosley Centre, St Michael's Church.

JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS



Contact: Antoinette Mangion, 0414 735 943
Meeting Time and Venue: Monday 17th February, 10:00 am at Cardinal Clancy room, St Patrick's Church

LEGION OF MARY ST MICHAEL'S



Contact: Max Rosario, 0490 137 533 (for statue bookings)
Meeting Time and Venue: Every Thursday, 1:00pm – 2:30pm at Sid Mosley Centre, St Michael's Church.

LEGION OF MARY ST PATRICK'S



Contact: Doris Zammit, 0419 274 002 (for statue bookings)
Meeting Time and Venue: Every Monday, 6:30pm at Cardinal Clancy room, St Patrick's Church.

MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIESTS



Contact: Max Rosario, 0490 137 533
Meeting Time and Venue: Monday 9:30am-10:30am at Sid Mosley Centre, St Michael's Church. All are welcome!

MQOF SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP



Contact: Frank Mangion, 0410 830 877
Meeting Time and Venue: 9th February 2025, 12pm - 2pm at Cardinal Clancy room, St Patrick's Church.

ROSARY GROUP



Contact: Diane Zerafa, 0403 554 566
Meeting Time and Venue: Every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday after the 8am Mass, at St Michael's church.

CATECHIST MINISTRY



Contact: Sandra Baker
admin@mqofblacktown.org.au
For More Information please contact our the parish office.

TEHILLAH COMMUNITY



Contact: Ash & Rozario Fernando, 0416 861 976 or 0412 195 916
Meeting Time and Venue: Saturday 14 December 2pm - 4pm at the Cardinal Clancy Room, St Patrick's Church.

TRUE LIFE IN GOD PRAYER GROUP



Contact: Diane Zerafa, 0403 554 566
Meeting Time and Venue: Saturday 14 December 3.00pm at Sid Mosley Centre St Michael's Church

YOUTH MINISTRY



Contact: Parish Office
admin@mqofblacktown.org.au
For More Information please contact our Youth Minister through the parish office.

SACRAMENT OF INITIATION



Parents wishing to have their children baptised are to contact the parish office prior to attending a Baptism workshop. The next workshop will on Saturday 18th January 2025 - St. Patrick's Church.

For more information please logon to our website:
<https://mqofblacktown.org.au/sacraments/#baptism>

Thank you



for giving homeless mothers and children safety, support, and a place to call home.

"I was so happy and grateful to have a place to call home. I finally felt secure for the first time in a long while."

Johanna, 22-year-old mother who escaped from domestic violence, thanks to community support.



Mary's Pantry volunteers would like to thank the Parish Community and Uniting Church Blacktown for being so generous to our Christmas Giving Tree appeal.

Food that was donated will go towards making Christmas hampers for those doing it tough during this season.

Parish Team Employment 2025 – Greystanes – Faith Enrichment Role

For a suitably qualified and experienced person 16 hrs/wk onsite in faith enrichment:

- Facilitating/resourcing parents as they guide their children in sacraments faith
- Liaising with key faith enrichment ministries
- Assisting opportunities for faith inquiry and for parishioners' enrichment
- Sharing in relevant admin and tech tasks with the team

For more information about the role and details for making application, please contact: parishoffice@olqp.org.au



Join us every Wednesday from 10:00am until 12:00pm at Sid Moseley St. Michael's Church and every Friday from 10:00am till 12:00pm at Cardinal Clancy room at St. Patrick's Church, for our Arts and Crafts activities will include: Embroidery and Embellishment, Crocheting, Knitting, Arts and Crafts (Painting) & Sewing.

Please, note all sessions are free. Materials for the lessons is provided or bring your own materials. Refreshments are provided.

For any inquiries please contact:



SCAN ME 

MARY, QUEEN OF THE FAMILY PARISH, BLACKTOWN

Please join us for the annual

Christmas Gala

Carols - Food & Drinks and Lucky Door Prizes

14th DECEMBER 2024

Saturday | from 6.00 pm
Nagle College School Grounds & Hall
58A Orwell Street Blacktown

FOR FOOD/ DRINK VOUCHERS
PLEASE CONTACT PARISH OFFICE
PH: 02 9622 1125 OR
EMAIL: ADMIN@MQOFBLACKTOWN.ORG.AU

Food / Drink Vouchers - \$5.00ea - (Single Ticket)
\$20.00 - FAMILY TICKET - (2x Adults) & (All Children)
Food Voucher includes sausage sizzle & drink
FREE GIFTS FOR CHILDREN 12 YEARS & BELOW
PLEASE REGISTER YOUR CHILD'S NAME & AGE
<https://www.mqofblacktown.org/christmas-gala-2024>

Christmas Giving Tree

St Vincent de Paul Society invites parishioners to take a tag from the Christmas Tree in the church to meet the needs of the disadvantaged in our local community, with gifts and non-perishable food.

It would be appreciated if all gifts could be returned by **Thursday 12th December**.

If you are donating a present, please do not wrap it, instead leave it in a bag with the gift tag from the tree.

Please note the annual St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal will take place on **Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th December 2023**

God bless, and thank you for your help.
SVDP Blacktown Conference

Free English and Citizenship Classes

Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains are offering English and Citizenship classes at Mamre House, 181 Mamre Rd, Orchard Hills, on a Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am to 2pm during school terms. Free childcare is available.

If you are interested in enrolling, please contact Mamre Crèche on (02) 8843 2506 or Nepean Community College (02) 4724 9000.

CHURCH MAINTENANCE UPDATE

St Patrick's Church – Roof Project Update

Recently we received notification from the Bishop's Office, that our application to spend \$600K and borrow \$500K needs to be considered by the Diocesan Property Council, the Diocesan Finance Committee and the College of Consultors. Owing to the Christmas holidays and the timing of their various meetings it may be early February before we receive approval for the Roof Project. I'm afraid we can't do anything until the approval is given.

All donations to the parish, using the various TAP'N'GO machines around the Churches will now go to meet the development and maintenance needs of the parish which will of course, include repayments to the Diocese for our loan.

To assist our parish needs, can you consider donating regularly online, either via EFT, credit/debit cards or even envelopes. This will help us plan for the future of Mary Queen of the Family Parish.

Thank you for your continued generosity

Fr Wim

2025 MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE

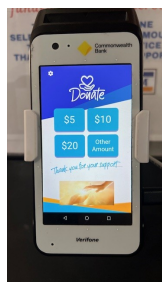
SAINTLY TRAVEL PILGRIMAGES

Join David and Angeline Wilkes from St Aiden's Parish on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje from April 1st to 9th, 2025. This is their third pilgrimage, and the group will be staying with visionary Mirjana Soldo, guided by her long-time English interpreter, Miki Musa. Fr Neil Bulathsinhala will also be accompanying the group as the Chaplain.

Places are limited, so if you feel called to experience the peace of Medjugorje, please contact Angeline Wilkes at 0410 665 306 or visit saintlytravel.com.au for more details.

PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

You can also support the parish by using our **Tap & Go Machine**. The machine amount is variable, please use the screen to donate the amount you wish to give. It also accepts Apple Pay, Google Pay and Pay Wave. All contributions go to the maintenance and development of the Parish as does the second collection at weekend Masses.



Planned Giving (Direct Debit or Credit Card) is also an option if you wish to do cashless donation to the parish, forms are available in the foyer and on our parish website or contact the parish office on 9622 1125.

Setting up a one-time or recurring donation/Planned Giving is quick and easy. Just go to: www.mqofblacktown.org.au/donations.

You can also send your offerings/donations thru bank transfer:

FIRST COLLECTION: For the Diocesan Clergy

Account Name: Diocesan Clergy
Bank: CBA BSB: 067 950 Account Number: 0000 4265
Reference: 6004 - Donor's Name

SECOND COLLECTION: For the Parish

Account Name: Blacktown Catholic Church
Bank: CBA BSB: 067 950 Account Number: 0000 0677
Reference: 6004 ~ Donor's name

If you encounter any issues signing up, please email Sarah at accounts@mqofblacktown.org.au. Thank you so much for your continued support to our parish. We are grateful!

Mary Queen of the Family Parish, Blacktown (MQOF) Finance Report for the Financial Year 2023 - 2024

INCOME / EXPENDITURE

	2023-2024 F/YR	2022-2023 F/YR	CHANGE
Income	\$702,117.77	\$ 587,541.79	19.5% (Increase)
Expenditure	\$584,219.85	\$ 594,207.47	(1.7%) (Decrease)

OUR COLLECTIONS

	2023-2024 F/YR	2022-2023 F/YR	CHANGE
First Collection (to the Diocese)	\$118,762	\$ 62,689	89.4% (Increase)
Second Collection (to the parish)	\$ 302,860	\$ 354,772	(14.6%) (Decrease)
Average First Collection	\$ 2,284 per week	\$ 1,206 per week	89.4% (Increase)
Average Second Collection	\$ 5,824 per week	\$ 6,823 per week	(14.6%) (Decrease)

Our parish needs to generate \$50k per month of income, to meet our obligations and expenses. At present we generate an average of \$59k per month, a surplus of \$9k per month. Our yearly insurance premium alone was \$75k as of February 2024.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS – TOP 4

FUNDRAISING EVENTS – Amounts raised

Bishop's Father's Day Appeal	\$ 3,655	Parish Feast Day - August 2023	\$ 12,800
Bishop's Christmas Appeal	\$ 3,433	Parish Golf Day - September 2023	\$ 5,800
Bishop's Good Shepherd Appeal	\$ 3,314	Parish Hoyts Movie Nights x3	\$ 10,946
Caritas / Project Compassion	\$ 5,385	Christmas Gala - December 2023	\$ 4,580

TOP MAINTENANCE WORKS that were carried out in both churches during the financial year

St Patrick's Church (SPC)		St Michael's Church (SMC)	
Admin toilets refurbishment	\$ 7,900	New Guttering	\$ 14,000
Office, Presbytery and Garage - New Locks and Controls	\$ 5,900	Installation of New Doors	\$ 6,000
Presbytery 2 new split Air Conditioners	\$ 4,600	Painting of Doors and Sanctuary Ceiling	\$ 5,000

PARISH FINANCIAL STATUS AS OF 30 JUNE 2024 (as compared to 30 June 2023)

	30 June 2024	30 June 2023
Our bank account balance was	\$ 242,423 (CR)	\$ 205,226 (CR)
Our outstanding loan balance was	\$ 172,876 (DR)	\$ 203,731 (DR)
Our debt to the PCF* was	\$ 10,100 (DR)	\$ 71,216 (DR)

* Parramatta Catholic Foundation (PCF) – The Diocese reduced this debt for all parishes during this year by changing the way the quota is calculated, both now and going forward. Candle money from both our churches is used by us to reduce this debt, so thank you to everyone who purchases these.

MQOF INVESTMENT PROPERTIES – 9 properties owned in total

- Net rental income generated for the 2023 / 2024 F/YR was \$197,776 as compared to \$129,688 in the 2022 / 2023 F/YR.
- All our investment properties were leased as of the close of business on 30 June 2024.
- The Syro-Malabar community are paying \$1,200 per month to use SMC and a further \$200 a month for use of the garage.
- The cost of maintaining these properties continues to be an issue for us due to the age of the buildings. A total of \$35K was outlaid on maintenance works on our properties over the year, including \$6k on the property at 151 Reservoir Rd.

UPDATE ON THE ST PATRICK'S CHURCH (SPC) ROOF ISSUE and our 'Raise the Roof Appeal' (RRA)

- Resolving the SPC roof issue has taken us much longer than we would have hoped, due to several issues and delays that have arisen along the way. But we are now pleased to announce that the tender to fix the roof has recently been awarded to GS Design + Construct at a cost of \$506,605*. To this end, we have applied to the Diocese to spend up to \$600,000, if needed, and to borrow \$500,000 over the maximum repayment term available to us. Our application to spend needs to be considered by the Diocesan Property Council, the Diocesan Finance Committee and the College of Consultors. Owing to the Christmas holidays and the timing of the various meetings it may be early February before we receive approval to proceed. Accordingly, we can't do anything until the approval is given but, we plan to get things moving as soon as that is sought.

* This amount is subject to change due to the delay in locking in a start date in late 2024.

- Funds raised through the 'Raise the Roof Appeal' amounted to \$211,153 as of 30 June 2024 (which includes \$85k from an insurance claim). This appeal has now been withdrawn and all donations made to the parish by means of the Second Collection and Planned Giving etc will now go to meet the development and maintenance needs of the parish, which will of course, include repayments to the Diocese for our loan in the future.
- Thanks go to Ray Francica and Charbelle Aboumelhem for their continued assistance on the Roof Sub-Committee and to Bruce Moa, a Quakers Hill parishioner, who is providing us with extensive assistance and expert advice.

- And, given the issues we've encountered with the SPC roof, the Finance Committee have elected to have the SMC roof inspected and for any necessary repairs/improvement works to be carried out. The roof will also be thoroughly cleaned.
- Please refer to the 'Church Maintenance Update' section of the bulletin each week for the latest news on this and any other maintenance matters affecting our parish.

OUR TOP 3 PRESSING NEEDS / FINANCIAL ISSUES

- Whilst the resolution to the SPC roof issue is almost at hand, our biggest financial issue is now the sizeable debt that we will carry over the next few decades. Whilst we have taken the maximum loan term available to us (to minimise our monthly repayments) we will endeavor to reduce this debt through ongoing fund-raising events and requests for donations.
- Our church car parks continue to be things that we need to keep an eye on, with regards to their upkeep and safety. We will be working closer with both schools in sharing this responsibility and cost going forward given their substantial use of both facilities. Resolving the SPC roof issue has meant that we haven't been able to undertake other much needed works around the parish such as, for the installation of both fencing and CCTV (with the aim of reducing the incidences of vandalism) and to substantial improvements to our car parks, for example.
- A change of insurer by the Diocese meant that our yearly premium of \$75k due as of 1 February 2024 could no longer be paid monthly by us, but rather, had to be paid in full within 30 days of receipt of the bill. We chose to pay this year's bill using funds from our Term Deposit, as against borrowing the amount and paying interest on top. The need to pay the insurance bill within 90 days of receiving the bill going forward will be an ongoing thing, as will the likelihood of the premium amount increasing each year.

FINANCIAL YEAR 2023 / 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- The 'Collections / Planned Giving Appeal' made by Michael Zerafa at all Masses over the weekend of 29-30 June 2024 saw a modest increase in the amounts being given to both collections as well as a small uptake in Planned Giving contributors.
- We received a total of \$7,500 Government Volunteers Grants which were used to purchase laptops and a TV screen for the Parish Meeting Room.
- Sales through our Piety Stores have contributed \$19k net to our parish. Thank you to anyone who purchased something and to those who are involved in this Ministry.
- The Parish Audit for 2024 was completed and gave our financial administration a tick of approval.
- We held 3 different Parish Movie Nights at Hoyts Blacktown. They were well-supported, and we were able to raise \$10,946.
- We donated \$5k to our sister Parish – St Anthony de Padua, Nissan Island, Bougainville, PNG but have decided to now cease this relationship given that they've repaired their roof, and that Fr Regie, who established the relationship, has left our parish.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY!

- Thank you to everyone who supports our parish through the loose collections, Planned Giving and Fund-Raising Events.
- We appreciate that there are many costs of living pressures and that it's become increasingly difficult to make ends meet.
- All we can ask is that you support your parish, to the best of your ability, based on your situation at the time, knowing that the parish too has obligations and commitments that it must meet each month, for us to remain operating and serving you.
- If you do have the capacity to increase what you give each week, even modestly, then please consider doing so.
- Thank you also to **Father Wim and our Clergy Team** (including Fr Kevin Redmond, who administered our parish for part of this year), **to Sarah, our Business Manager** for her prudent management of the parish's finances and assets, **to our Admin Team, to our Collectors** at all of our Masses for your service to this ministry each week, and, to all those who have assisted with, or sponsored, our Fundraising Events, such as the Parish Golf Day, our Feast Day, Christmas Gala and the Hoyts Movie Nights. It's all very much appreciated!
- A big thank you also to our generous **Parish Bulletin Advertisers. Please support these businesses that support us.**
- And, finally, thank you to all currently serving members of the **Parish Finance Committee** for your continued efforts and support. A big thank you to Col Morris, John Kurmann, Bill Callaghan and Jojo Stamati who have stepped down this year and to Kiran Saldanha, Raphael Saccasan, Glenda Sergio and Angelica Green who have now joined the committee since. Welcome!

If you have any questions with regards to any of the information within this report, please feel free to contact Sarah at the Parish Office on 9622 1125 or via email at accounts@mqofblacktown.org.au.

Thank you.

Fr Wim Hoekstra, Parish Priest

Michael Zerafa - Chairperson, MQOF Parish Finance Committee (November 2024)

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Colour the shapes that contain dots purple. Fill the other shapes with different colours.

